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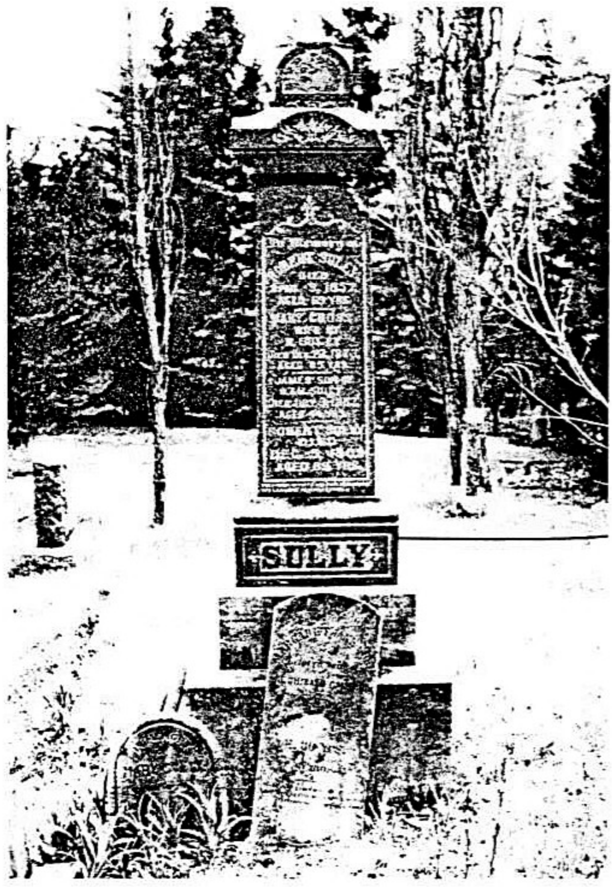

THE MACLAREN CEMETERY, WAKEFIELD, AND THE OLD CHELSEA PROTESTANT BURIAL GROUND, QUEBEC

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National Capital Commission
Commission de la Capitale nationale

Canada

To Pat Evans
with best wishes
June, 1986
Michael Boughton

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Report on The Maclaren Cemetery, Wakefield and the Protestant Burying Ground, Old Chelsea, Quebec.

This report has been prepared in response to a request for information on the physical history of the landscaping of these two historic cemeteries. The preparatory research was severely limited by a number of conditions. Firstly, the unavailability of property records prior to 1900 which were destroyed by fire in the conflagration at Hull in April, 1900. Secondly, the actual burial records and minutes of the cemetery boards which governed these two sites were not immediately at the researcher's disposal, nor is their any guarantee that those records would address the landscaping aspect of the two cemeteries. Conversely, maps or other visual material were not to be found. Thus, with the exception of a few loose documents making vague reference to the sites in question, the actual research on the sites was perforce limited to their as found conditions or recent transcriptions of the data from the monuments accompanied by contemporary maps locating the site of tombstones. This was a beneficial aid in discerning the possible location of earlier walkways or roadways, and thus was a tool in determining attempted landscaping of the cemeteries at the time of their foundation or in their formative period.

This report is divided into four parts. The first section is devoted to the historical background of the two cemeteries in question; the second section treats the foundation and evolution of the nineteenth century cemetery in Europe and North America, while the third section analyses nineteenth century cemetery landscaping styles and themes. The fourth and final section touches on popular traditional burial customs. The information contained in these last three sections will demonstrate the impact certain of the ideas contained in them had on the formation of the Maclaren and Old Chelsea cemeteries. These concepts will be addressed in the conclusion of the report.

THE HISTORIC BACKGROUND

(a) The Maclaren Cemetery, Wakefield, Quebec

This cemetery is laid out on parts of lots three and two in the second range of Masham Township. The earliest part of the cemetery is on lot three and is laid out in a triangular shaped plot the dimensions of which are 211.2 feet long, 213.8 feet wide and 302.3 feet at the rear.[1] It is a curious shape for a cemetery which is laid out on a grid, and no evidence has been yet located to clarify this mystery.

It is located on land which appears to have been part of a 1700 acre purchase by the Scots pioneer David Maclaren, or it may have been purchased by his sons in 1844 when they bought the Fairbairn mill below the cemetery.[2]

No precise date can be given as to when this piece of land began to be used as a place of burial. The earliest date of death on any monument in the plot is 1864,[3] but there could be some question as to whether this person is actually interred there since that monument is in a relatively contemporary section of the cemetery. A more reliable inscription is to be found on the tombstone of Jane Townsend (see number 103 on map and in the Maclaren Cemetery transcription in Appendix A) who died in 1868. The other monuments in the immediate vicinity bear death dates from the early 1870's to the mid 1880's.

However, the earlier mentioned stone (#125) bearing date 1864 should not be wholly discounted as it lies very close to the centre of the original cemetery and thus may have been but a few feet from an earlier entrance road into the yard. Some credibility can be given to this notion by the evidence taken from an 1872 survey of the cemetery which clearly indicates a large plot some 75.9 feet long and 22.4 feet wide running westward from the eastern limit of the cemetery towards the centre.[4] It should be noted that the majority of the Maclaren family, including David Maclaren, the founder of the family, are buried at the most easterly section of that plot. Directly west of the Maclaren plot is the family plot of the Townsend family, all of whom rest on the highest, and therefore, most preferred, ground of the cemetery, as will be demonstrated elsewhere in this report. Persons of more modest means were generally buried in the lower ground of cemeteries similarly structured as this one.

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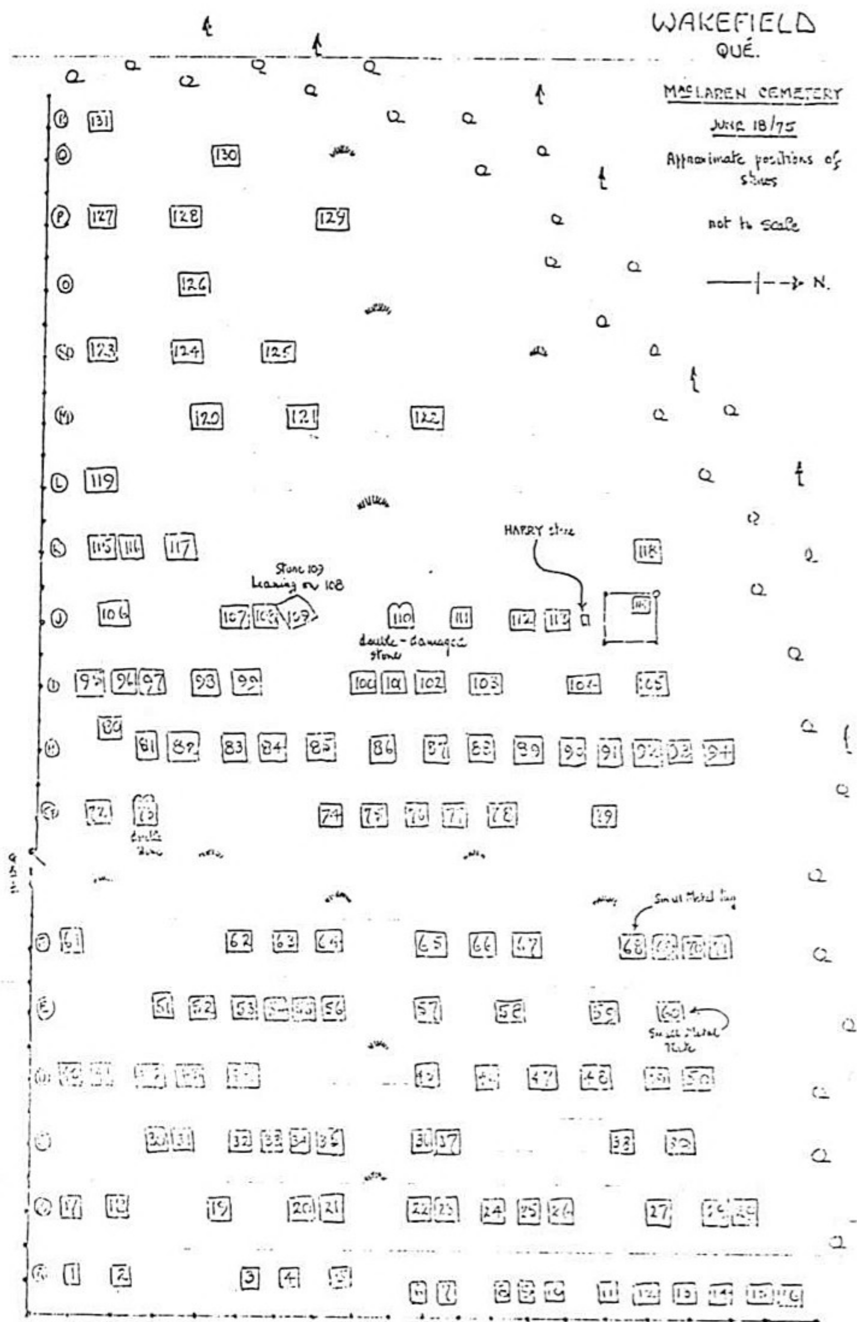

Figure 1

(a) The Maclaren Cemetery, Wakefield, Quebec (cont'd)

Yet even this method of dating a cemetery is inadequate given that many early pioneer burial monuments were nothing more than a pile of stones or a wooden marker, all of which were either carted off years later or simply deteriorated with time, leaving no evidence of a burial.[5]

An inventory made of the estate of John Maclaren in September, 1874 contains some evidence that the cemetery was in the ownership of the Presbyterian Church at that date, and other evidence indicates that they may have been in ownership of the land at an even earlier time. John Maclaren, who died June 6, 1874, was co-owner of the grist mill with his brothers, and resided in the large brick Gothic house above the mill. By the terms of the notarial inventory, the following note indicates that this cemetery was, indeed, owned by the Presbyterian Church at Wakefield.

> ..."It is also exempted a small piece of land from either lots number two or three in the second range (Masham Twp.) deed to the "Presbyterian Church" and as the said James Maclaren is unable to determinate presently on which of these two lots is such reserves, he binds himself to ascertain in the same as soon as possible..."[6]

Furthermore, this inventory indicates that the Maclaren family had been generous to the Presbyterian Church at Wakefield prior to 1874.

> ..."All that tract or parcel of land and premises lying and being in the first lot of the second range of the township of Wakefield in the County of Ottawa... Save and except the following land and premises lying and being within the above tract or parcel of land, that is to say The Presbyterian Church and land thereto attached, granted to the trustees of the said

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(a) The Maclaren Cemetery, Wakefield, Quebec (cont'd)

> Church lying at the extreme eastern portion of the aforesaid tract or parcel of land... as also that portion of land and premises lying on the north side of the Peche River and bounded in front by the Gatineau Road and river and occupied by Mrs. Widow David Maclaren and also that portion of the said tract or parcel of land and premises sold to the trustees of the aforesaid Presbyterian Church and used by them as a Manse and Glebe..."[7]

Since the land registry abstracts and deeds for Wakefield were destroyed in 1900, it is difficult to determine exactly when all this land was granted off to the Presbyterian Church. However, there was an active Presbyterian congregation at Wakefield as early as 1846, and the Maclarens were prominent members. James Maclaren recorded a frame two storey building to hold 100 as a place of worship on a point of land on the east side of the highway, and in 1861 the Free Presbyterian Church in Wakefield was valued at $600. Indeed, Norma and Stuart Geggie of Wakefield have written the following in regards to the Maclarens and the Wakefield Presbyterian Church:

> "The frame church at Wakefield with a capacity of one hundred, which existed in 1851, had been replaced within the next ten years by one double its size, and it is most likely that this was on the site of the present United Church in Wakefield. This property was sold by James Maclaren, acting for David Maclaren, his father, in 1859, for the price of five shillings..."[8]

Furthermore, in 1867 property had been purchased from David Maclaren for the "sole use and benefit of the Congregation as well as for the site of a church, chapel or school house, burial ground and residence for minister of said congregation."[9] This area consisting of two acres bordering the Gatineau River was used for the purpose of a

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Manse, thus giving rise to the idea that the cemetery land may have been purchased as early as 1859 as part of the sale of the land for the church.

A large brick church was constructed in 1871, which stood on the present day site of St-Andrew's United Church. The survey of the cemetery was conducted by John McLatchie, P.L.S., New Edinburgh and dated May 1, 1872, thus the limits of the cemetery may have been established at the time the brick church was constructed, but its actual foundation could go back to as early as 1846.[10]

There is in the cemetery a fairly substantial piece of land (between lines M and K on the map, Appendix A) which appears empty and unused, but may be the burial ground of a number of earlier settlers whose monuments of piled stone or wood markers have simply disappeared. These markers, if they had existed, might have indicated burials from the 1840's, as this section of the cemetery is about the centre of the early yard.

The 1872 survey map indicates that the road leading to the cemetery originally entered the grounds at the centre of the southern boundary, and was moved to the eastern end of the southern line when the new section was opened.

The contemporary section of the cemetery lies east of the old section, on lot number two, range two of Masham Township. This section was opened in 1933. The land was left to James R. Smith in trust for the cemetery board by the will of the late Alexander Maclaren.[11] It should be noted that this lot was acquired by James Maclaren in letters patent dated April 29, 1850 and might indicate the actual date of the cemetery on the adjoining lot.[12]

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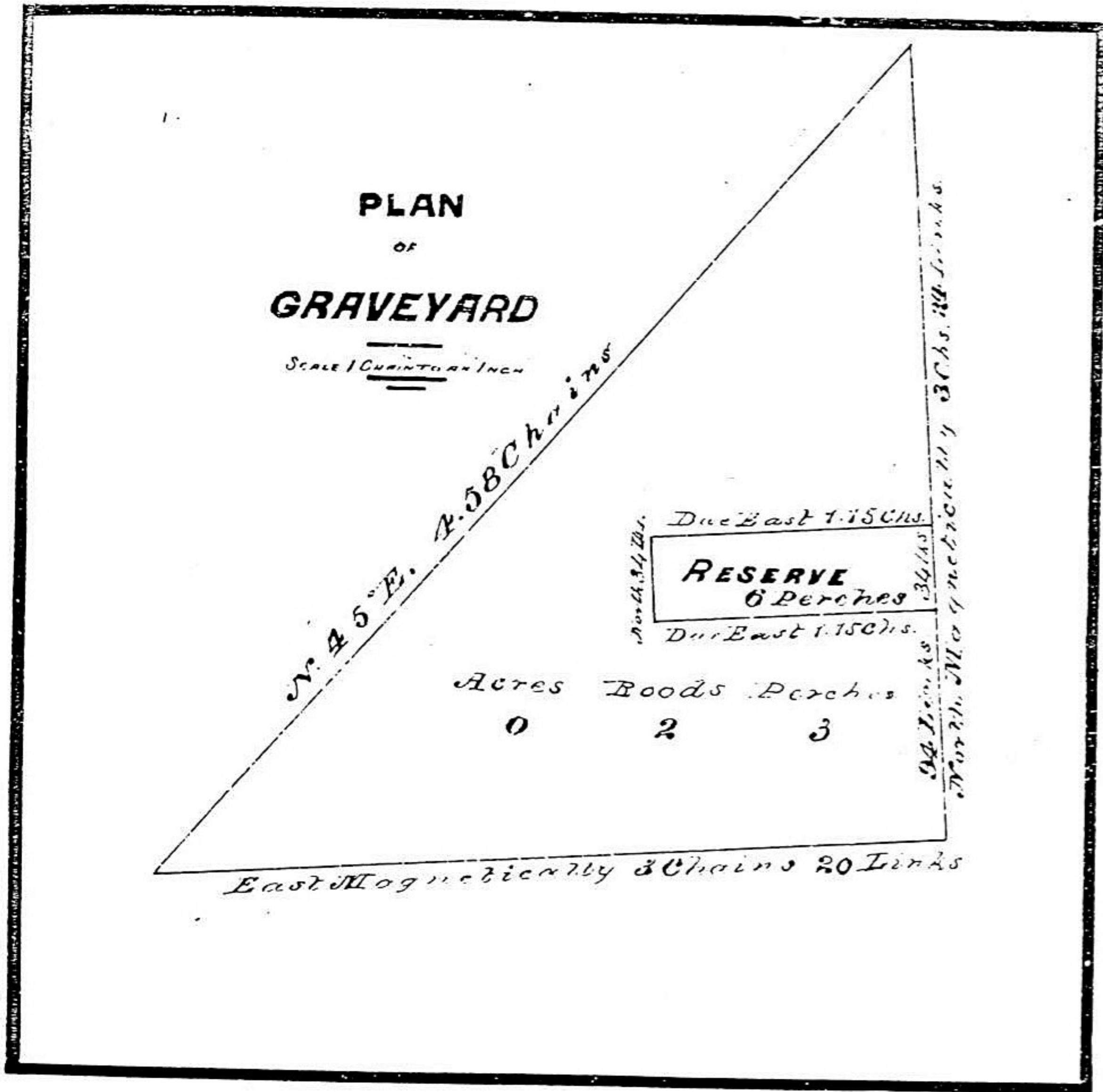

Figure 2.

b) Protestant Burying Ground, Old Chelsea

Due to the lack of registry material and a real paucity of reference to this burial ground in notarial collections, very little can be ascertained about this place. What is known is that it is located on lot 14-A-5 of the 8th range of Hull Township in the unincorporated village of Old Chelsea.

This lot was originally granted by letters patent to Philemon Wright's son-in-law, Thomas Brigham, in 1824.[13] He constructed a sawmill and other works on Chelsea Creek just to the west of the cemetery. About 1850 the whole property, including the cemetery it is presumed, were sold by Brigham to Charles Watters Chamberlin, son of Josiah Chamberlin, who had come to Wright's settlement from Lowell, Mass. between 1801 and 1803 to be employed as a millwright. In the early 1860's Charles W. Chamberlin married the widow of Charles Lennox Brigham, son of Thomas Brigham. Both of them could claim some kind of blood relationship to Philemon Wright, but more particularly Chamberlin's wife, who was a great granddaughter of the old man. Although Josiah Chamberlin's relationship to Philemon cannot be clearly ascertained, there were enough Wright-Chamberlin connections to make certain that some kind of blood relationship existed.[14]

The land on which the cemetery is located remained in the hands of the heirs of Charles W. Chamberlin well into the 20th century, and as late as 1947 it was (and may still be) part of the estate of Noble Chamberlin. The actual ownership of the site has not been ascertained at the time of the writing of this report.[15]

The person or persons who laid out this burial ground are even more remotely known. The fact that it was named, and remains so named a Protestant Burial Ground recalls pre-nineteenth century Puritan New England terminology. The fact that the oldest recorded burial in the place is Philemon Wright's brother Thomas (1801) suggests that the Wright family themselves were the founders. Most of the names which appear on the monuments in the yard are those of families connected by blood to the Wrights.

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(b) Protestant Burying Ground, Old Chelsea (cont'd)

There is no physical evidence standing to suggest why this burial ground is now so obscurely located behind a hotel and some houses. However, written documentation states that at about the site where the lane descends into the yard stood a school house of frame construction.[16] This building was consumed by fire early in the century, but it had strong connections to the Rev. Asa Meech, another New England emigrant to the Wright colony who was also an ordained Congregationalist minister. From 1812-1822 he was minister at the Congregational Church of Canterbury, Connecticut, but the records of St-James' Anglican Church in Hull indicate that he was in this area for a period in 1815. The fact is, however, that he was on lot 21, 10th Range Hull Township in 1821 and that he lived there until his death in 1849. He is buried in the Protestant Burying Ground at Old Chelsea.[17]

M. A. Meech wrote of her ancestor and his connection to the old school in the following manner:

> "Asa Meech was a natural leader and seemed to possess an aptitude for administering successfully to the sick. Recollections on record of many old residents, now deceased, tell of his wise counsel and kindly deeds to and on behalf of the settlers for miles around. Irrespective of creed or birth, without remuneration, this talented and consecrated man served the community, preaching the Gospel, supervising the Sunday School and on week-days teaching school in Chelsea for many years... It is assumed that, as was the custom of those early days, Asa Meech held those first services in the homes of the settlers. Later it is believed that his work was continued in the little frame school house, long since razed by fire, which was located on the land now occupied by the residence of Mr. Thomas Nankin."[18]

A school house which serves as a church and Sunday school complete with a cemetery in the rear yard bears all the hallmarks of a Puritan New England meeting house, a veritable community centre for the people in the district of

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(b) Protestant Burying Ground, Old Chelsea (cont'd)

Old Chelsea.

The affinity to replication of a small New England village does not end there. It seems to be more than coincidence that decided the construction of a Town Hall (a latter day version of the meeting house) directly across from the school house and cemetery where the final end of all living persons could be clearly placed on display. The very fact that the cemetery is at the centre of Old Chelsea and not on the outskirts of the village or in a distant obscure location evokes nothing more than the common in the centre of a New England village with its burial ground in the middle on view from every direction.[19] A more detailed examination of New England burial practices will be found in subsequent sections.

The Old Chelsea Protestant Burial Ground is rectangular in size, being 135.8 feet wide and 162.4 feet long. There is a narrow projection of land at the rear where some recent burials have been made. This area is 88 feet long by 46 feet wide.[20]

From Burial Ground to Cemetery. The Evolution of Burial in the Nineteenth Century.

It is not generally realized that in Great Britain and early European North America cemeteries were rare. Burial was, of course, universal, but coffins were placed in church crypts, under the church floors or outside in the adjoining church yard. The cemetery evolved out of the churchyard and its purpose today is threefold:

(i) It provides a designated, generally consecrated place for the disposal of corpses.

(ii) Cemeteries provide a place where the living can "communicate" with the dead. Some people find it psychologically useful and necessary to visit the cemetery to lay flowers on the grave or to just sit and think about the departed.

(iii) Cemeteries also represent a place where symbols are usually found which express the past existance on earth of children, men and women. These symbols are usually in the form of gravestones but can also

include mausoleums or other structures which might be more as symbols of living family wealth and piety than of remembrances for the dead. They are generally regarded as suitable symbols referring to an expressed hope of immortality and to reduce a fear of death and the entire obliteration of one's personality.

In Western society, the movement to have cemeteries removed away to an isolated area far from the living began with the European experience in India. Scotland was also a place where late in the 18th century burial grounds began to be set aside, remote from the living, but these sites were often associated with former church buildings. However, visitors to India noted that there were fabulous new cemeteries being founded by Europeans in India and other hot climate colonies. The death rate caused by disease and dissipation was considerable, and bodies had to be disposed of quickly in hot climates. The South Park Street Cemetery, Calcutta, founded in 1767 for hygienic and functional reasons was one of the grandest of them all. It was liberally embellished with great formal Classical mausolea, domed, obelisked, arcaded, colonnaded and porticoed. Europeans returning home rarely failed to contrast the grandeur of the new cemeteries in India with the scandalous, overcrowded and miserable churchyards of Britain.[22]

Noteworthy because of their implications for the Maclaren Cemetery at Wakefield since its founders were Presbyterian Scots or Scots-Irish immigrants, are the Old Calton Burial Ground in Edinburgh, the Clifton Old Cemetery in Belfast and the later Necropolis in Glasgow, the city of the Maclarens. The Old Calton Burial Ground, Edinburgh was laid out in the 18th century and embellished with grand mausolea and housetombs, creating the effect of a series of urban streets with tombs. Landscaping is not significant in that cemetery and the effect is urban in character. Also built on high, hilly ground is the Clifton Old Cemetery, Belfast, and J.S. Curl's observation is striking when considering the Maclaren Cemetery:

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"The need to form new, spacious hygienic cemeteries set apart from churches and from the living was recognized in eighteenth century Belfast. It is not insignificant that the leading citizens of Belfast at that time were Presbyterian Freemasons who were steeped in the ideas of the Enlightenment, and many of whom knew France and India. Not a few had been educated at the great Scottish universities of St.Andrews, Glasgow and Edinburg. The Clifton Old Cemetery in Belfast was founded in 1774 when the Earl of Donegall gave the land on which the.... new Burying Ground was to replace the waterlogged, overcrowded, and insanitary churchyards down in the town. Clifton Old Cemetery is surrounded by a wall, and was unattached to any church. Elaborate house tombs are built around the perimeter, and a few trees were planted. The layout is formal, rectilinear, and did not permit much in the way of planting."[23]

The Glasgow Necropolis was founded in 1831, ten years after the Maclarens had left for Canada, but the obvious similarity in siting the Maclaren Cemetery like the Necropolis cannot be discounted as a factor influencing the location of the Maclaren Cemetery. The family had continuing correspondence with Glasgow and later immigrants to Wakefield would have brought tales of the new, grand Necropolis. It is not impossible to assume that the ageing David Maclaren might not have received a pamphlet entitled "Necropolis Glasguensis with Observations on Ancient and Modern Tombs and Sepulchure" published in Glasgow in 1831, or the more likely Biographic and Descriptive Sketches of the Glasgow Necropolis published in 1857.[24]

The new Necropolis was a wonder of its time and the influence of its design was far-reaching. Curl has made the following contemporary observation on the site:

"...and the cemetery was opened in 1832. There is no cemetery in Britain as spectacular as the Glasgow Necropolis, for it is literally a City of the Dead on the hill beside the Cathedral of St-Mungo. A view of the Necropolis in 1847, however, shows it as originally intended, approached by a massive bridge over the Molendinar Ravine, with roads following the contours, and high spots capped with monuments and mausolea. The planting is spare."[25]

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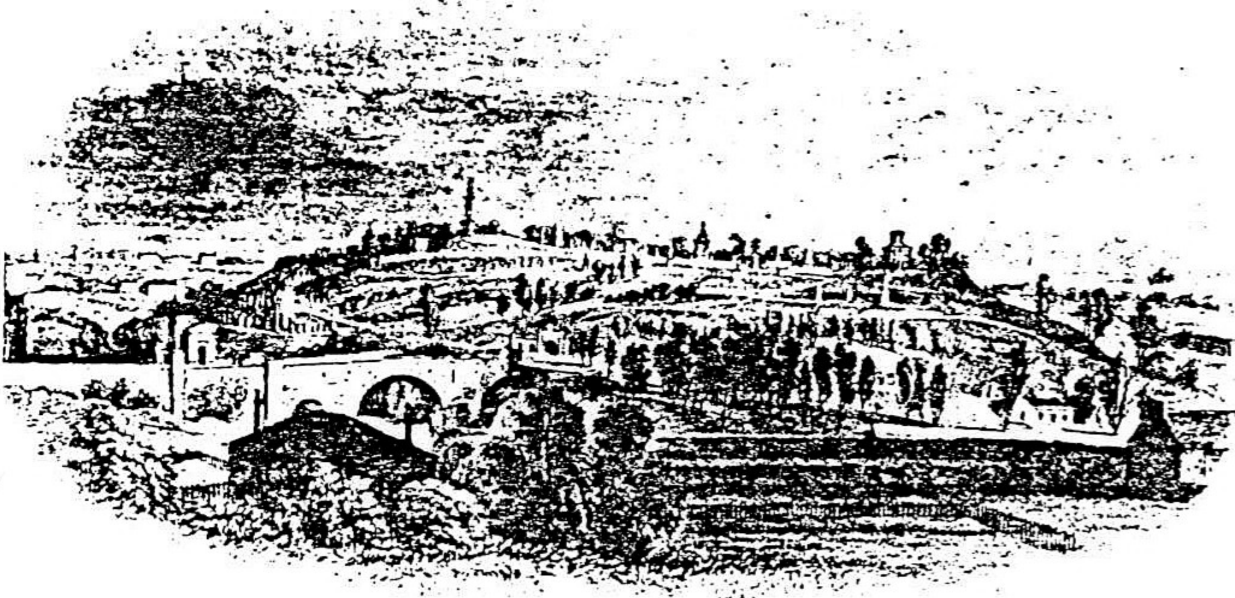

Figure 8. 'View of the Necropolis, Glasgow' from Sketches of the History of Glasgow by James Pagan. Glasgow, 1847. Drawn and Engraved by Allan and Ferguson (The Author's Collection).

Figure 3.

In North America, the old concepts and ideas of burial were brought from Europe. Well into the nineteenth century, North American graveyards reflected ambivalent attitudes towards death, afterlife, and the spirit world. One modern writer summed up the prevalent attitude amongst colonists in these terms:

> "...In the common imagination, graveyards were one step removed from Heaven, and half a step from Hell.... The underworld, the perpetually sunless place of Hell, demons, and putrefication, quivered beneath the graveyard grass. Since humans consecrated the graveyard to the God of Light, it seemed only natural that the Prince of Darkness wished all the more to violate the corpses interred within it. People looked on burial and graveyards with hope and horror, and watched uncertainly as they filled the hole and mourners deserted the consecrated ground. Christianity might triumph in the end but as dusk fell the powers of darkness gained temporary advantage."[26]

The New England states were the earliest English-speaking settlements in North America and as such have the oldest non-Roman Catholic burial sites. In these colonies the standard place of burial had been amongst the living, most often in the middle of a town. In New England town commons were frequently employed as graveyards. These burial grounds were treated as simply unattractive necessities to be avoided as much as possible by the living. This attitude prevailed from the earliest times to well into the early years of the nineteenth century. Chroniclers of the period often described these yards as being "an unenclosed, unkempt section of the town common where the graves and fallen markers were daily trampled upon by people and cattle."[27]

The New England Puritans saw the graveyards as simply a place of burial, and almost every tradition associated with burial was suspect of pagan or papist roots. Therefore, they alligned graves at random and for decades interred bodies with no graveside prayer at all.

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Generally speaking, every New England town owned a burial ground, and the site was determined by the location of the town meetinghouse. This meetinghouse usually stood at the geographic centre of the town with the burial ground on one side of it.

Other motives were also at work in the choice of site as well:

> Puritans designed their graveyards as teaching devises, as unmistakable reminders of the coming of Death. Very few graveyards were carefully tended, and because meetinghouses and adjacent burying grounds were deliberately sited on infertile soil, vegetation was frequently scraggly. No ornamental planting was attempted but here and there a graveyard was encirded with a stone wall.... But, once walled, the typical graveyard was not otherwise maintained... it was a carefully articulated emblem of the wilderness of personified death. To the Puritan, life was represented by the town, by the cleared and cultivated land, death was represented by the wilderness. Every graveyard, then, was intentionally chaotic, intentionally representative of sudden pierces, stranglings, great disorders, darkness, and horror.[28]

Indeed, these burial grounds had no family plots, and when the last row was filled subsequent graves were crowded in wherever there was room. The burial ground at the centre of the village, plainly and familiarly visible to all, was a group monument perpetually admonishing the living to emulate the virtues of the dead and continue in the faith. Those persons interred there were now all equal for family and wealth no longer mattered. One historian has succinctly described the cemeteries of early America in graphic terms.

> "...It is unlikely that the graveyards of pre-Revolutionary America had any of their present well-cared-for beauty. The frequent cutting of grass to produce a lawn was a 19th century innovation; floral decorations were rare, and the custom of visiting the grave to tend it was still not general. Ornamental planting

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> was unheard of. The well-to-do and prominent members of the community were often buried in the church, so that a sort of equality prevailed in the churchyard itself. The array of headstones and markers, though by no means uniform in design or size, had none of the motley of the 19th century cemetery. And this was not only because there was little money to spend ostentatiously; it was also because the function of the markers was less ornamental than instructive."[29]

At the dawn of the 19th century there began a shift in peoples attitudes towards death and burial. It also witnessed the advent of a greater awareness of proper health and sanitation rules as diseases spread in epidemic proportions across Europe and North America. The rise in population led to a rise in burials, thus overcrowding the churchyards. The multiple uses of a single plot became a scandal, and the decaying bodies close to the surface and the great numbers lying in tombs became a source of offensive odours and, some thinkers believed, a source of disease. The language used to describe the conditions causing disease caught from the fetid air were terms such as "noxious miasma" or "pertilential effluvia," among others.[30]

The response of urban society was to establish new cemeteries along the lines of those previously established in India beyond the town or city limits, or at least away from the most populated areas. These were known as "rural cemeteries" and the only part of them that was rural was the fact that they were suburban. In no way did they appear like the small rural churchyards and cemeteries which dot the modern landscape. They were elegantly landscaped, planned "gardens" where lavish monuments were erected over the manicured graves of the dead.

Sanitary precautions was not the only reason for establishing burial grounds at a distance from the urban core. A profound change in attitudes towards death was occuring in Western society. The Industrial Revolution gave rise to the disintegration of the unity of the family, church and community. Society was becoming quickly urbanized, causing deep social changes. Men were increasingly drawn far from home for most of the day in order to perform their work.

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The church was becoming the province of woman, while institutions were being established to care for the young, the sick, the aged, the poor and the criminal. Home was increasingly becoming an isolated and romanticized haven from the turbulent social world:

> It was a world moving from traditionalism to modernity. In some ways it was an exhilerating world, but it was also a confusing and discomfiting one, and large numbers of people began trying to draw back from it.[32]

The result of such an attitude led to the romanticizing of the family unit, and the cemetery had become "...in many ways, the refuge of the psychologically overburdened family."[33] It was the place where peace and calm would be the rule, and the dissolving bonds of the family would be ever strong.

One observer has noted of this period the condition which created the new cemetery and put it in a summary:

> The world outside was changing and seemed to be turning upside down. But at least in the permanence of the graveyard, traditions could be maintained-indeed, maintained, exaggerated and sentimentalized - if not for those still living, at least for posterity, and for posterity's remembrance of the dead..[34]

Religious attitudes also expressed the change. The Puritan New England child had been told daily to think about death, how it would be on his or her own deathbed. The more horrifying aspects of death were magnified by statements such as "what a dismal thing it will be to witness parents going with Christ to Heaven, but themselves going away to Everlasting Punishment." The nineteenth century child of the disintegrating family was taught to contemplate death as a peaceful and glorious transformation, often likened to the releasing of a butterfly from a cocoon. Most important of all, it meant a transformation that brought with it eternal and heavenly reunion with parents and siblings in the afterlife.

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Therefore, the new "rural" cemeteries put great emphasis on the family unit which manifested itself in the cemetery in the form of the family plot. A new characteristic developed in the rural cemetery, which later became universal. This was the fencing in of individual family plots. Cast iron railings were the preferred material and in the decades following the 1840s critics noted that the cemeteries were becoming seas of fences. "But the elegant iron rails, which divide the different small lots, wrote two foreign visitors to America in 1853, "are neither ornamental...nor reverential for the place. Exclusiveness little benefits a cemetery; the idea of private property, carried even into the realm of the dead, where no one can own more than he covers, has something unnaturally strange. [36]

The new rural cemeteries were also to be cultural institutions. One enthusiast of the rural cemeteries movement stated that "our cemeteries rightly selected, and properly arranged, may be made subservient to some of the highest purposes of religion and human duty. They may preach lessons, to which none may refuse to listen, and which all that live must hear." [37]

The concept of the cemetery as a place of instruction and arbiter of morality became a common theme in the discussions of the purpose of a rural cemetery, more so than the arguments concerning overcrowded facilities and health hazards. Time and again, the belief that a "rural cemetery is a school of both religion and philosophy" was reiterated:

> "...In the new type of cemetery the plenitude and beauties of nature combined with art would convert the graveyard from a shunned place of horror into an enchanting place of succor and instruction. The world of nature would inculcate primarily the lessons of natural theology. The fullness of nature in the rural cemetery would enable people to see death in perspective so that they might realize that "in the mighty system of the universe, not a single step of the destroyer, Time, but is made subservient to some ulterior purpose of reproduction, and the circle of creation and destruction is eternal." [38]

The teachings of nature were to be complemented by the instructions of art, based on the Western concept that man was above and apart from nature. Art was not to be confined to the monuments alone, but was to be seen in the landscaping of the cemetery as well.

Mount Auburn Cemetery, founded at Boston in 1831, is perhaps the best example of this new attitude. It was laid out with a system of carriage avenues and graveled footpaths suitable to the topography. The avenues of the cemetery were named after trees, while the footpaths running between the graves were named after flowers. There was also a selective thinning of trees for family plots, while the minimum size family plot was established at 15 by 20 feet and initially sold at $60 per plot. Each family plot could be fenced, but only in metal or stone, not in wood. It was also required that all grave markers be made of stone. Slate, the old material for markers in churchyards, was especially forbidden. There were no specific restrictions on gravestone styles, but approval of the cemetery trustees was required before a monument could be erected.[39]

Combined with the instructional purpose of the new cemetery was a sense of patriotism and roots. Accordingly, the function of monuments was to show the living "much of our destiny and duty." A new awareness of history provided by the artistic memorials of a rural cemetery would reinvigorate the sense of patriotism. It would also give people a sense of historical continuity, a feeling of social roots, a "sense of perpetual home." In America, the cemetery was to remind them that the standard of living and the blessings of a republic they owed to those who have gone before."[40]

The rural cemetery would elevate and strengthen patriotism because: "The spot where their fathers and friends are buried, if it possess those charms which impress the heart and gratify the taste, will never be forgotten, and the land which contains it, though it have no other attraction, will yet be dear to the living for this."[41]

Very few persons ever objected to the rural cemetery movement. However, many were apprehensive about burying their loved ones out in the country far from home. Some felt a certain guilt or lack of respect in doing this, while others

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worried about grave robbers and possible desceration. Others simply did not like the concept of paying for a plot. Religious and community leaders spent considerable time assuring the public that all this was correct. Biblical references were produced to reinforce the idea of the rural cemetery. Much was made of the fact that Abraham had purchased a plot of ground to bury his wife, Sarah. The Bible was also used to sanction rural burial with the proper references to Deborah being buried "under an oak," Saul and his sons "under a tree"; Moses was buried in "a valley in the land of Moab, "Joseph in a "parcel of ground in Schechem," and Manassah in "the garden of Uzza."[42]

Thus the rural cemetery came into being and proved popular with its landscaped hills, winding paths, floral displays and monuments. In Ottawa Beechwood Cemetery represents the rural cemetery pattern, as does Mount Pleasant in Toronto. The influence of the rural cemetery was not confined to the cities, but spread out to touch all cemeteries everywhere in North America, even to the Old Chelsea Burial Ground and the Maclaren Cemetery at Wakefield.

The small local or community cemetery of the nineteenth century rarely employed a landscape architect to design the new yard, but the influence of their work can be seen in these cemeteries. A grid pattern was the norm employed, since it was the prototype for almost all city, town and farm layouts. The "streets" became walkways, the "blocks" containing several grave plots. More often than not these new 19th century cemeteries were located on hill tops, a tradition deeply rooted in Judeo-Christian heritage as spiritual locations. In practical terms, hilltops are also less susceptible to flooding and without much value in terms of agriculture, or, in older days, city expansion.[43]

Differential property values characterized most of these small cemeteries, and there are "good" and "bad" neighbourhoods in them as well as in cities and towns. The top of the hill being the resting place of the more prominent and wealthy families of a community, while the areas descending the hill being the burial areas for the less affluent.[44]

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The nineteenth century North American cemetery can basically be broken down into four categories of its growth. (1) the pioneer period; (2) the Victorian period; (3) the conservative period; (4) the modern period.

The pioneer period covers the time up to 1879, and was a simple one in terms of cemetery and secular architecture. The period was dominated by the influence of Gothic Revival architecture, and this is seen in cemetery monuments. Characteristic cemetery monuments were in gothic, tablet and block forms (see diagram). The stylistic theme was the pointed arch, and ornamentation was absent or extremely simple. The monuments averaged only 30 inches in height, were worked in white marble and often possessed inscriptions. The grid system dominated the cemetery as it did all other settlement.

The Victorian period extended from 1880 to 1905, during a period of radical change in architecture. Classical architecture on the grand, lavish scale dominated, and cemetery monuments reflected this. The obelisk and columns became popular forms of monuments, along with the wrought iron enclosure fence for family plots.

The average height of monuments grew from 30 to 50 inches, when the small markers of the poor were overshadowed by the lavish monuments of the rich. Some monuments became truly massive, replicas of Greek temples were erected and the flowery epitaph reached its zenith. The cemetery neighbourhoods became established, the primary dividing line being economic and social status. The grid pattern was continued, but many cemeteries were given visual focus towards the centre. Circles or "turnabouts" became common, and fountains were sometimes installed. The very size of the Victorian period monument and its harkening back to the timelessness of Classical architecture suggests a striving for immortality and the rejection of death. The ancient obelisk, a symbol of eternity, is the logical monument choice for this epoch.

The conservative period (1906-1929) was the time when architecture returned to a more modest and plain appearance. Ornamentation on buildings began to be trimmed, and simple, geometric forms were becoming popular. Monuments created in the form of the round scroll, the slant pulpit and the block form became common. The average height of monuments dropped to 24 inches and block forms with raised top inscriptions became popular. The grid plan remained,

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but some curving lines were introduced and a decrease in differentiation of plot by property value.

The modern period (1930-1970) continued the trend of the conservative epoch, except that stones became even lower or disappeared altogether because they "spoiled the landscape." Maintenance became even easier, since lawn mowers have no stones to avoid. Paths and walkways often followed the contour of the land and not the rigid grid system.[45]

In general, the earliest graves in an older North American cemetery are in the centre, on top of the hill, surrounded by the monuments of the Victorian era, which, in turn, are encompassed by those of the conservative and modern periods. Visually, the scene presented resembles idealized diagrams of concentric city growth. However, there are exceptions to this rule, as Richard V. Francaviglia points out:

> "...Centrifugal growth patterns, however, are not always encountered. The family plot cemetery, which accepts burials over large areas and retains space in all blocks for future burials, is an important exception. Old Victorian stones may be next to modern plaques, and each block, rather than the entire cemetery, has evolved individually through time. Burials are accepted at random across the entire cemetery, and no well defined zonations exists[46]

This, then, is basically the general evolution of the nineteenth century cemetery over the past one hundred and fifty years.

The Ideal Landscaped Cemetery of J.C. Loudon.

John Claudius Loudon was a British landscape architect who pioneered for the improvement of churchyards and cemeteries in his native land, and, as such, wrote the only definitive work on the subject now available. For this reason, and because the influence of his work was so widespread, a section has been devoted to his writings in this report. His work, published in 1843 under the title On The Laying Out Planting and Managing of Cemeteries, described how a new cemetery should be located and laid out.

Loudon felt that it should be in an elevated and airy situation, open to the north but with a southern aspect where the surface could be easily dried by the sun. A flat, even surface was best for internments. The cemetery should be at a little distance from the population but close enough "in order to lessen the expense of carriage, and shorten the time for the performance of funerals and of visits by the living to the tombs of their friends." Furthermore, it should be visible at a distance from all directions as it would be an ornament to the countryside and an "impressive memento to our mortality."

He calculated that for a grave with out a head-stone the average outside dimensions would be 7 feet by 3 feet six inches; and with a headstone 8 feet by 4 feet. In this regard Loudon was not as generous as the founders of The Methodist Burying Ground at Bytown, who, by advertisement in December 1844, were selling family plots measuring 9 feet by 12 feet for five dollars, and other lots measuring 9 feet by 6 feet, for three dollars.

A boundary fence was also required for Loudon's ideal cemetery to insure security from theft. In a country cemetery, "where there are few buildings or public roads an iron railing may be employed as a ring fence," but in the city a wall 10-12 feet in height supported by buttresses, was to be preferred. If economy was a consideration, "a hedge and a sunk wall may be used as a boundary, and the best plant for the hedge is the common holly." There was to be only one main entrance, but if the situation allowed, a second, smaller entrance could be built to allow workmen and carts into the cemetery for grave diggings gardening or erection of monuments.

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Loudon suggested that the grounds for graves be laid out in double beds, which could be slightly raised in the middle to slope down to the grass paths. Under every green path, he suggested there might be a tile drain, which would keep it as dry as a gravel walk. This path would be no wider than three feet, since that was the space required to carry a coffin, but four feet was preferable, since it admitted carrying a coffin by handspokes. Where a hand-bier was used, a two foot wide path would suffice. In laying out graves, Loudon insisted that no part of the ground be devoted exclusively to any class in society, but, at the same time, no part should be so small as not to admit of any monument. His concept of proper layout was thus:

> "In general, we would form a broad border, say from 12 feet to 20 feet wide, along the main roads; a border immediately within the boundary fence, of the same width as the height of the latter; a border from 8 feet to 12 feet wide on each side of the gravel walks; and the interior of the compartments we would lay out in beds or zones, straight or curved, with green alleys of 3 or 4 feet between. These beds ought to be of such a width as to contain two rows of graves, with the headstones of each row placed back to back in the middle of the bed, so as to face the alleys. The necessary width for this purpose is 18 feet, which will allow 7 feet for the length of each grave; 1 foot at the head of each grave, on which to erect a headstone, or other monument not exceeding 1 foot in thickness nor the width of the grave; and 1 foot at the end next the walk, for a foot-stone or number..."

In Loudon's ideal cemetery all the roads and walks were to be straight for a more economical use of the ground, as all the graves were rectangular, "and every rectangle being a multiple or divisor of every other rectangle." Furthermore, they contributed far more than curved lines to a sense of grandeur and solemnity. A winding road from the main entrance appeared too much like the approach to a country residence or villa for Loudon's taste. The roads could vary in size from 12 to 20 feet wide, and the walks were not to be narrower than 5 or 6 feet, while the green paths were to be no more than 3 or 4 feet wide.

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Trees and shrubs were to be introduced sparingly into the cemetery, since they impeded the free circulation of air and the drying effect of the sun. They were not to be placed in masses or clumps in the cemetery, nor in strips or belts around the periphery. The planting of trees or shrubs which in any manner imitated the landscape of a park or pleasure ground was to be avoided as well, lest it cause confusion or be misinterpreted in people's minds. Furthermore, trees and shrubs took up ground which might be better used for graves. Single trees could be planted because graves could be placed between them, but large shade trees on low ground were to be avoided since they would impair the drying of wet soil.

Loudon suggested that tree species in a cemetery be confined to narrow, conical shapes, like the cypress, which produced little shelter or shade, but had been traditionally associated with burial. Evergreens and trees of dark foliage were extremely suitable because of their dignity. As well, evergreens produced much less litter from their foliage than the other varieties. On very hilly cemeteries round-headed and conical shaped trees could be planted, but the preference should still be for evergreens such as the ilex, Lucombe oak, holly, or dark-foliaged pines.

Along each side of most or all of the main roads a row of trees could be planted parallel to the avenue to form a "running foreground to the interior of the compartments, and to whatever there might be of distant scenery." Loudon suggested that these trees be pines or firs of dark foliage. Along roads and walks in the direction of east and west the trees would be planted farther apart or plant narrower growing kinds," such as the common cypress, the Irish yew, the Swedish juniper or the fastigate arbor vitae, etc." Not only did pines and spruce grow rapidly, but they could be cut into conical shapes quite easily, and "along most of the gravel walks, and along the centre of the double beds.... plant for the most part only fastigate shrubs, such as the Irish yew, Irish and Swedish juniper, Juniperus recurva, and some other junipers, and the arbor vitae, box, common yew, etc."

The planting of flowers did not suit the taste of Loudon, he believing that they disrupted "a state of quiet and repose (which) is an important ingredient in the passive sublime; and moving the soil for the purpose of culture, even over a grave, is destructive of repose." However, should this be deemed necessary, the flowers should be laid out in the form of a grave, and only on spots where at some future time a grave would be dug.

Cemetery Customs and Traditions.

Most customs and superstitions which found their way into the physical setting of the graveyard were associated with plant life, but there were a number of others which should be mentioned as they affect the layout of the cemeteries in question. In both of these cemeteries graves are laid out facing eastward. This is a custom which began in the Iron Age when corpses were interred with their feet towards the east, facing the first glimmer of light. In time the Second Coming was confused with the dawn, the idea being that Christ would come again, but only from the east with the sun. It was also assumed that He would arrive at Jerusalem, also in the east.[48]

Lunatics were buried beyond the perimeter of the graveyard because it was thought that their madness was atributable to demonic possession. Unbaptized children and the excommunicate suffered the same fate. Suicides and criminals were often buried at a cross roads in the hope that their spirit would be confused enough to not come back and haunt the living.[49] In some continental countries, actors were not permitted burial on consecrated ground, but after 1823 English murderers were permitted burial in churchyards. Suicides were later looked upon with kindlier eyes and were allowed Christian burial, but their bodies were laid on the north side of the churchyard or their stone was turned to face west.[50] One such stone exists in the Maclaren Cemetery. Witches were buried face down. The north side of a churchyard was considered the most vulnerable to evil spirits, since everything from winter gales to the Vikings came from that direction.[57]

In the north eastern counties of Scotland farmers set aside plots of ground sacred to the Devil. Often called "Clootie's Croft," "Black Faulie," "Devil's Croft," and the "Goodman's Field," these pieces of land, sometimes as large as 4 acres and occasionally walled off, were never planted and the populace hoped the Devil might remain. Early modern Scots believed that souls tarried in the crofts, frequenting especially those near graveyards. Nineteenth century Scotland was still dotted with the small, secretly unworked plots, but by then far fewer Scots believed that the Devil must have a physical place in every community lest he wander about doing evil.[52]

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European graveyards were Christian by consecration but pagan by planting. However, Abraham bought a field on the death of Sarah for a burial ground and was not satisfied till "the cave that was therein and all the trees that were in the fields and in all the borders round about were made sure." Trees were at one time objects of veneration and worship. The primitive mind believed movement was a sign of life, and therefore, the cracking and movement of branches in the wind left the impression of some subtle imagination dwelling in natural objects with the power to do good or evil.[53]

There was a belief that the yew tree on hallowed ground served the purpose of providing the wood for the bows of archers, or that the great size of the tree protected the fabric of the church from storms and provided shelter for the worshippers. Modern science has shown that trees act as air purifiers and although it is unlikely that earlier generations realized it, the trees in the cemetery would help cleanse the air of the poisonous gases arising from the cemetery ground. Still others believed that the roots of the yew tree found their way to the mouths of the dead.[54]

The weeping willow by its bowed form as if in grief, was frequently planted in a position where it might overhang a favoured tomb, like a perpetual mourner. However it is more likely that it was planted in damp and marshy cemeteries where the gravedigger was troubled by water, since the willow is a thirsty tree, deriving its life from the stream and is generally to be found on the banks of the river. For this reason it is the accepted symbol of resurrection, and its branches are born by mourners at a masonic funeral.

Myrtle, apart from its sombre appearance, is a symbol of resurrection by the fact that it is evergreen. Various kinds of fir trees are also planted as recognized symbols of death, for, unlike other trees, the life goes out of them directly they are cut. The cypress has held the place of honour throughout the ages in connection with death. The Romans placed its branches in the vestibule as long as the body was there, to signify that it was a house of mourning, and it was also carried in the funeral procession. The yew tree and holly bush, apart from their other symbolism, were favorites because of their constant greeness and therefore were representative of the resurrection.[56]

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In some parts of Europe it was believed that a soul left its corpse only in spring as flowers blossomed above the graves. Perhaps for that reason trees thought to ward off evil spirits - evergreens and beeches were most respected in that regard - were planted among the stones to protect captive spirits during the winter.[57]

A great folklore of plants thrived in graveyards, where almost every plant carried special meaning. Rosemary symbolized remembrance, and mourners held sprigs of box and rosemary at the burial, and deposited them on the coffin before leaving. Medicinally, rosemary was held to be good for improving the sight and memory. German peasants used to place garlands of rosemary around the meek of a corpse to ward off witches and the Devil. Dreaming of rosemary was a warning of impending death, and graveyard visitors plucked it and other flowers with utmost care.[58]

Mandrake was another common graveyard plant, and is similar to belladonna. It was believed to have had a personality, and, if growing in a cemetery, was attached to the spirit of the dead. There appears to be no better foundation for this belief than that it roughly resembled the human form, having two taproots of equal length which suggested legs. When pulled from the ground, the small fibres breaking, a sound was produced which was readily translated by the imaginative into a shriek.

The Germans made the mandrake into dolls, dressing them with care and respect, and keeping them in caskets. Midnight was the correct time to dig them up, when all kinds of absurd rites were practised, a "black dog" being employed to drag them from the earth.[59]

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Conclusion

It would appear from the material considered that the two cemeteries represent two different aspects of burial. The Old Chelsea yard reflects the ancient New England burial ground, and, indeed, is still known as the Old Chelsea Protestant Burial Ground. The connation being that this was a place to get rid of a corpse and forget about them; it bears none of the values a later generation was to place on cemeteries. Although there is a grid plan employed, corpses are buried at random with some facing east and others facing west. Practically all those buried here have some claim to be a blood relative of Philemon Wright and to each other. Hence, it is really a large family plot. It's location and relationship to the old meeting hall and the former school house further enhance the concept of the New England burial ground - that place of dread and horror - in the middle of the village common.

If the Old Chelsea Burial Ground was free from the reforms of the rural cemetery, it was no doubt free from the superstitions mentioned in the preceeding chapter, thus landscaping was probably never a priority. It was probably not fenced in until 1891, when the present gates were installed, and this appears to be the only decoration or ornamentation in the yard, other than the small cast iron fence around John Mather's grave. Several other plots have a pipe fence around its perimeter, but it is only in this respect that the Fundamentalist Protestant inhabitants of this burial ground fell victim to the sentimentalized adulation of the family that became important with the establishment of the rural cemetery movement and its effects.

At Wakefield the evidence of the influence of the rural cemeteries movement is much stonger. Loudon's suggestion of establishing a cemetery on a high hill with a scenic view has been accepted, and so has the concept of placing the cemetery away from the populated areas for sound health reasons. Burials have taken place in neatly arranged graves equidistant from neighbouring plots in correct rows on the prescribed grid plan. Not one tree grows in the cemetery so as to allow plenty of sun to dry the soil and quickers decomposition, a concern very dear to the hearts of sanitation conscious Victorians.

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Family plots abound in the Maclaren Cemetery, and it should be noted that older photographs reveal that low, pipe iron fences surrounded these until recent years when they were removed. It has been suggested, that an ornate cast iron fence once surrounded the entire, older section of the cemetery, but this appears to be highly unlikely since cast iron fences of that description and magnitude were only found in the towns and cities and only around the most prestigious of buildings or public institutions. The only basis for this idea of a cast iron fence stems from a small, black, cast iron plaque with Maclaren in raised letters moulded into it. It is far more probable that the Maclaren family, being the most prominent in Wakefield, had a wrought iron fence around their plot with a gate at one end on which hung the small cast iron plaque carrying the family name. This appears all the more probable since the cemetery belonged to St-Andrew's Presbyterian Church and not the Maclaren family from a very early date. (See figures 5 and 6 for types of cast iron plot enclosures).

Loudon suggested certain types of trees and shrubs suitable for cemetery planting, and other traditional plantings can be found in the section on burial customs. The road leading to the cemetery from the Maclaren house could withstand some landscaping attention.

The concept of a boundary fence around this cemetery merits some attention, but particular emphasis should be made on the proximity of the Maclaren house to the cemetery and its style. The house is basically a Picturesque Gothic Revival villa in its design, style and setting, it being the very picture of rustic Romanticism. Ideally, the gate entrance into the cemetery might reflect the Gothic Revival in the gate and gate posts, carrying the design of the verge boards on the house to the gates themselves. A common nineteenth century post and wire fence would be suitable for the rest of the enclosure, and this can be seen in figure 7 and in the photograph of Acton Cemetery (C.1926) and the photograph of an unknown burial in the north about 1925. This was a popular fence until well into this century, and has great dignity and merit, making it a very appropriate fence for a cemetery enclosure.

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As has been mentioned before, this cemetery reveals the influence in its setting to the Glasgow Necropolis, and perhaps some further study should be made on that cemetery in the form of visual material.

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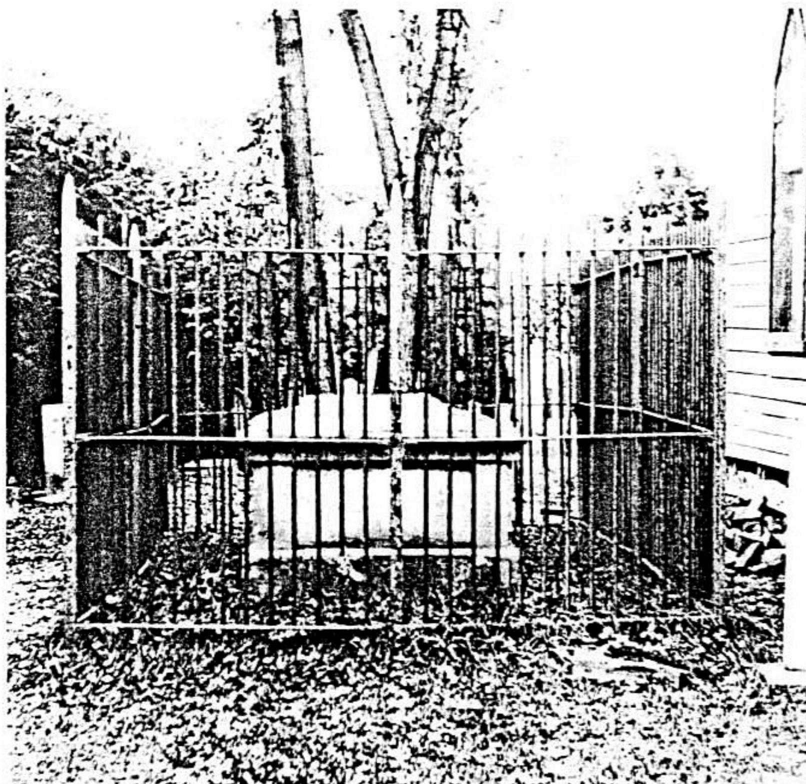

Figure 5.

Figure 6.

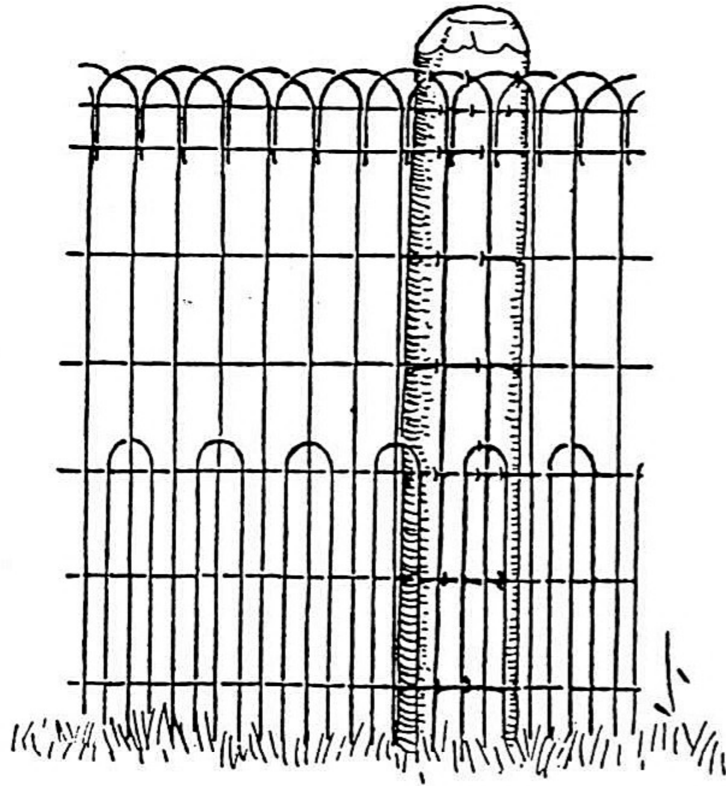

Figure 7.

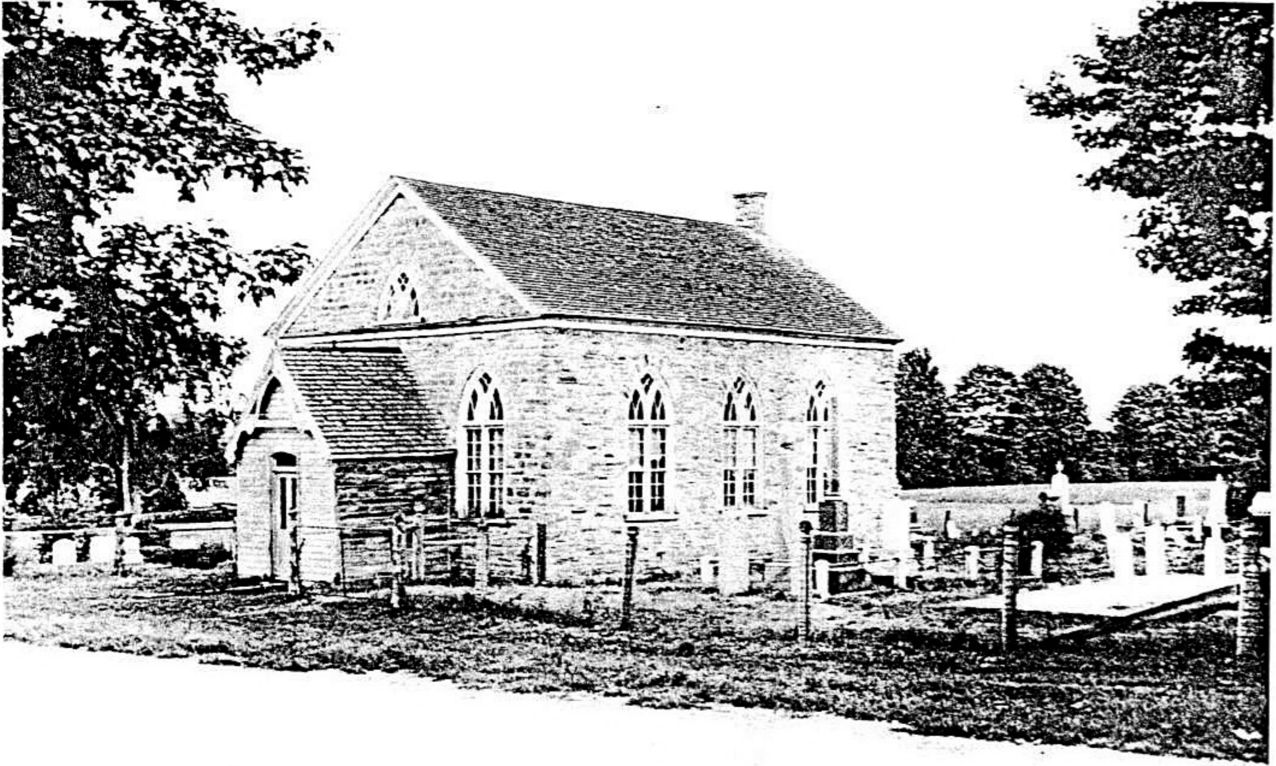

Figure 8.

Figure 9.